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THE
NECESSITY
OF
GOOD WORKS
UNTO
SALVATION
CONSIDERED:

Occasion'd by some
Reflections and Misrepresentations of
Mr. (*alias* Dr.) ABRAHAM TAYLOR, in
a Pamphlet of his lately published, called,
An Address to young Students in Divinity,
by way of Caution against some Paradoxes,
which lead to Doctrinal Antinomianism.

By JOHN GILL D.D.

L O N D O N :

Printed for, and Sold by A. WARD, at the *King's-Arms*,
in *Little-Britain*. M.DCC.XXXIX.

(Price Six Pence.)

T. H. T.





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ABOVE *six years* ago I sent a printed letter to the Gentleman whose name stands in the *Title-page* to this, on account of some ill usage of my self, and contemptuous treatment of some doctrines of grace; to which he never thought fit to return an answer. The impression of

4 *The Necessity of Good Works*

that letter quickly went off, and I have frequently been solicited by my friends to reprint that, and my *Discourses on Justification*; but could never be prevailed upon to do any thing of that kind till now, for no other reason but this: I saw that he and his friends were not inclined to enter into a controversy about these things, and I did not chuse to move it afresh, or appear forward to it, which I thought re-printing would look like, or might be so interpreted; and therefore I determined to sit still, and only defend my self when any attacks were made upon me. In this resolution I have persisted, notwithstanding the little, mean, and *disingenuous methods* this Gentleman has made use of, to render my character odious among men, one of which I have detected, and publickly exposed^a; notwithstanding his *ill-natur'd reflections* in his *noisy and bombast* charges at several ordinations of ministers; and notwithstanding his *wrathful prayers* poured out before the Most High in monthly exercises, which must be shocking to pious minds, and abominable in the sight of God. The letter above-mentioned was not written with any design to provoke to wrath and anger; nor is there a single sentence, that I can remember, in it, that has any tendency that way: But it seems a grudge was

^a In an Advertisment at the end of Mr. Wallin's Funeral Sermon.

conceived, which has been broiling upon his heart ever since, and now at this distance of time he takes up a single phrase, and inveighs against it with the utmost wrath and fury; whereby he has most sadly verified that observation of the wise man, that *anger resteth in the bosom of fools.*

A controversy has of late been moved, or at least revived, by some ministers of the *Independent denomination*, about the duty of unconverted persons to believe in Christ, or about the nature of that faith which such are obliged to; a controversy in which I have had no immediate concern: And whereas it has been given out, that a book published not long ago, called, *A further Enquiry after Truth*, is of my writing, though another man's name stands to it; I take this opportunity of declaring to the world, in justice to the worthy author of it whose name it bears, and that I may not take the credit of another man's labours, that there is not one single sentence of mine in it; nor did I see the author when he came to town to print, nor his performance, until it was in the press; who I doubt not will give a proper reply to the notice taken of him. The Gentleman I am now concerned with, has thought fit to nibble at this controversy; and which he might have done without meddling with me, since what he has broke his gall about, has no relation

6 *The Necessity of Good Works*

to that. He tells ^b the society to whom he dedicates this *miserable* pamphlet, that he "was glad that an opportunity offered to declare against tenets, which can answer no purpose, but to weaken mens obligation to duty and holiness, and to lead to gross *Antinomianism*." But had he not an opportunity *six* or *seven* years ago of declaring against, not only this single tenet he has now taken notice of, but several others, which he imagines has the same tendency, and of attempting a confutation of them, had he either a head or a heart for such a service? For some months past, we have been alarm'd of this mighty work, That a learned doctor had conceived, and that in a short time the mountains would bring forth. But while we were waiting for, and expecting to see the wondrous birth, out turns a *filly mouse*: Which has made good the poet's words;

Parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.

What concerns me in this pamphlet, relates partly to my principles, and partly to my character and qualifications as a minister. I shall attend first to the one, and then to the other. The particular tenet, or principle struck at, is, that *good works are not*

^b Dedication, p. 3, 4.

necessary

unto Salvation considered, &c. 7

necessary to salvation, not in any sense; no, not as the antecedent to the consequent. This is called a *filthy dream*, a *dangerous paradox*, an *unscriptural absurdity*, ^c an *extravagant position*, ^d a *dangerous tenet*, *big with absurdity*, a *horrible blasphemy*, ^e *the senseless paradox*, ^f *rude and ignorant blasphemy*, ^g *the blasphemy invented by one of the vilest and leudest bereticks* ^h, *the draff of those who turned the grace of God into wantonness*; and, to close all, an *Antinomian paradox* ⁱ. When these ill names and hard words are taken out, there's very little left for me to reply unto. And whether the doctrine opposed deserves such ill language, will be better judged of, when the terms of this proposition, *good works are not necessary to salvation*, and the sense of it, are explained.

By *good works* are meant not the work of sanctification, a principle of grace or internal holiness, which though it is sometimes stiled *the good work* ^k, yet is not the work of man, but the work of the Spirit of God, and is therefore called *the sanctification of the Spirit* ^l. This I firmly believe is absolutely necessary to eternal happiness, both in infants and adult persons, and that without it neither the one nor the other can ever see the Lord; sanctifying grace being

^c Address, &c. p. 5.

^d Page 6.

^e P. 7.

^f P. 9.

^g P. 10.

^h P. 12.

ⁱ P. 13.

^k Phil. i. 6.

^l 1 Pet. i. 2. 2 Theff. ii. 13.

8 *The Necessity of Good Works*

an essential and initial part of salvation, or that branch of grace and salvation which the elect of God and redeemed of the Lamb are first made actually partakers of in their own persons, in order to their enjoyment of the heavenly glory. This man must be conscious to himself that I have expressed my self to this purpose in my letter to him; and yet he most basely insinuates that I hold, and represents me as saying, that “a conformity to him (Christ) in holiness, is not antecedently necessary to our reigning with him in light and glory^m.” If by conformity to holiness, is meant that internal conformity of the soul to Christ, the produce of divine grace in regeneration and sanctification: 'Tis a thought that never entred into my head nor heart, and which I abhor. Passive holiness, or that holiness of heart which makes a soul like to Christ, and is no other than Christ formed in it, or his image instamped upon it, in the production of which it is entirely passive, is absolutely necessary to the everlasting enjoyment of him; yea, I believe that an outward conformity to Christ in conversation, or active holiness, external holiness of life, is absolutely necessary to evidence the truth of holiness of heart in all that are saved, who are either capable, or have an opportunity of

^m Address, &c. p. 13.

performing it, and shewing it forth. This writer almost all along takes the liberty of altering the state of the question before us, and instead of *good works* puts *holiness*; thereby to suggest to his readers that I deny the necessity of sanctification to compleat happiness; which as it is an iniquitous proceeding, so it gives us a specimen of his skill in the management of a *regular controversy* he prates about. Nor by *good works* are to be understood the internal acts and exercises of grace, as faith, hope, and love; for though these are our acts, under the influence of divine grace, and so may be called our works, though not with much propriety, and as such good ones; yet these don't usually go by the name of good works, either in scripture, or in the writings of good men, or in our common way of speaking. This I mention to stop the mouths of some silly cavillers, who I perceive are fond of objecting these things. Though even these acts and exercises of grace cannot be thought to be so absolutely necessary to salvation, as that it cannot possibly be without them; since infants, as soon as born, though they may be capable of having the principles of faith, hope and love, implanted in them, yet I apprehend they cannot be capable of acting or exercising these graces: If therefore without these acts and exercises of grace persons cannot be saved, these must stand

B

excluded

10 *The Necessity of Good Works*

excluded from the kingdom of heaven. By *good works*, I understand a series of external holiness; not a single action or two, but a course of living soberly, righteously, and godly; a constant performance of religious duties and exercises, in the outward life and conversation: In this sense, and in this only am I to be understood in the proposition before us, and in all that I have said, or shall say concerning it.

It may be proper next to enquire what is the meaning of the word *necessary*, and in what sense good works are so. That they are necessary to be done, or ought to be done, by all that hope to be saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, is readily granted; but not in point of salvation, in order to that, or with a view to obtain it. Good works are necessary to be done, on account of the divine ordination and appointment; for such as are the *workmanship* of God, are *created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that they should walk in them*ⁿ. They are necessary, *necessitate precepti & debiti*, on account of the will and command of God, and of that obedience we owe to God, both as creatures, and as new creatures. They are necessary upon the score of obligation we lie under to him, and in point of gra-

ⁿ Eph. ii. 10.

titute for the numerous mercies we receive from him, and that by them both we and others may glorify him our Father which is in heaven. They are necessary to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, to recommend religion to others, to testify the truth of our faith, and give evidence of the reality of internal holiness. They are necessary for the good of our neighbours, and for the stopping of the mouths of our enemies. These things I have more largely observed and asserted in my Letter to this man; all which he conceals from his readers, and most vilely suggests to them, that I have vented the same notion, and am of the same opinion with *Simon Magus, Carpocrates*, and their followers; who held that salvation was through faith and love, but that other good works were not necessary; but were to be look'd upon by men as indifferent in their own nature, being neither good nor evil, nothing being naturally evil, and so might or might not be done: Things I never thought of, and of which I have the utmost abhorrence and detestation. With what face or conscience could he insinuate any thing of this kind, when I have so fully expressed my self upon the necessity of doing good works? But what will not a man say, intoxicated with passion? True indeed, I cannot say that good works are necessary to salvation, that is, to obtain it; which is

12 *The Necessity of Good Works*

the only sense in which they can be said with any propriety to be necessary to it, or in which such a proposition can be understood; and which I charge as a *Popish* and *Socinian* tenet, and hope I shall ever oppose, as long as I have a tongue to speak, or a pen to write with, and am capable of using either.

Salvation may be considered either in the contrivance of it from eternity, in the mind and counsel of God, and the designation of persons to it, or in the impetration of it in time by Christ, or in the application of it in effectual vocation by the Spirit of God, or in the entire consummate enjoyment of it in heaven. In every of these views of it good works are not necessary to it: Not to the contrivance of it, and *designation* of persons to it. God, when in his infinite wisdom he drew the scheme of salvation in Christ, fixed upon him to be the author of it, and appointed men unto it by him, was not moved hereunto by any works of his creatures, or by any foresight of them; they were then no moving causes with God, no conditions of salvation fixed by him, nor were as the antecedent to the consequent; no, not in the prescience or fore-knowledge of God: As they could not go before, so they were not foreviewed by God as any cause, condition, motive, or reason of his chusing one to salvation, and not another;

For

unto Salvation considered, &c. 13

*For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth^o. Good works are the consequents and fruits of election to salvation, not antecedent to it. Nor are they necessary to the impetration or obtaining of it in time by Christ: These did not move Christ to engage in this work, they were no ways assisting to him in it; they did not help it forward, or in the least contribute to the performance of it, which was done entirely and compleatly without them: Nor was it effected by him on condition of mens performing good works, nor were they necessary to it, as the antecedent to the consequent; they did not antecede or go before it, no, not in the divine mind or consideration, and in the view of Christ; for men were then considered, not as having done good works, but as evil and wicked; for *while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*, and obtained eternal redemption by his blood; and *when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son^p*. Good works don't go before, but follow after redeeming grace: Christ gave himself for his people, *that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works^q*.*

^o Rom. ix. 11.

^p Rom. v. 8, 10.

^q Tit. ii. 14.

Nor

14 *The Necessity of Good Works*

Nor are they necessary to the *application* of salvation by the Spirit of God in effectual calling, neither as causes or conditions, or as the antecedent to the consequent; they can be no moving causes to it, nor do they come into consideration in the divine mind, as the reason or condition of it; they are not the rule and measure of God's procedure in this affair; he *saves and calls with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace*^r. Besides, before regeneration, before effectual vocation, before a principle of grace is wrought in the soul, before the new creation work is formed, which is the initial part of salvation, or that branch of it which God's elect are first actually made partakers of in their own persons, there are properly speaking no good works done by them, or can be done by them; and therefore can't possibly be antecedent to salvation viewed in this light, but must be consequent to it: *We are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works*^s. Nor, lastly, are they necessary to the *consummate enjoyment* of salvation in heaven, no, not as the antecedent to the consequent; that is, as an antecedent cause to a consequent effect, which is the easy, common, and natural sense of the phrase; for who can hear of an

^r 2 Tim. i. 9.

^s Eph. ii. 10.

antecedent to a consequent, unless by way of illation, but must at once conceive of that consequent as an effect depending upon the antecedent as a cause? Wherefore if good works are antecedent to glorification as a consequent, then glorification must be and will be considered as an effect depending upon good works as its cause. And as it will be difficult to fix any other sense upon the phrase, and persons are and will be naturally led so to conceive of it, this, and this alone, is a sufficient reason why it ought to be rejected and refused. This man himself won't say that good works are necessary as antecedent causes, or as antecedent conditions of salvation or glorification: Let him then tell us in what sense they are necessary, as the antecedent to the consequent. His performance is an address to young students in divinity, and he takes upon him to be a tutor and director of them in their studies; but leaves them in the dark, and does not offer to inform them in what sense good works are necessary, as the antecedent to the consequent. Will he say they are necessary, as antecedent means of salvation? This is all one as to say they are necessary as antecedent causes, for every mean is a cause of that of which it is a mean. Will he assert that they are necessary, as an antecedent meetness or fitness for heaven? This must be denied. How can our poor, impure and

16 *The Necessity of Good Works*

imperfect works, our righteousnesses, which are as *filthy rags*, make us meet and fit for the heavenly glory? No, it is not works of righteousness done by us, but the Spirit's work of grace within us, which will be performed until the day of Christ, which is the saints meetness for eternal happiness. Will he say that good works are such necessary antecedents to salvation, though he don't chuse to say or can't say what, as that salvation cannot possibly be enjoyed, where they don't go before? I have, in my Letter to him, given instances to the contrary, proving that salvation is, where good works do not go before; as in the case of elect infants, and of persons called by grace in their last hours, when just ready to launch into eternity. If this doctrine is true, that good works are so absolutely necessary to salvation, that there can be no possibility of any, where they don't go before, what an horrible scene must this open to parents of children, who lose by death many, or most or all of them in their infancy? since, upon this principle, they must for ever despair of their eternal happiness. One should think that such a man as this I am concerned with, would have took care to put in a saving clause in favour of infants, especially when suggested to him; who supposes that all the infants of believers are interested in the covenant of grace, and consequently must be saved,

saved, at least those who die in their infancy; and if saved, they must be saved without good works, which they neither do, nor are capable of doing. *Maresius* ^t, I observe, when treating of the necessity of doing good works, for such ends and uses as have been already mentioned, and which no body denies, adds; "But this necessity is to be restrained to adult believers, who are able to perform outward good works; for *the infants of believers are saved without them* (even as they were sinners without any properly personal act of their own) though not without an inclination to them, by the grace and spirit of regeneration." Moreover, upon this principle, what hope can surviving relations entertain of their adult deceased friends? who though they have appeared to have had full convictions of their lost and miserable state by nature, clear views of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, an abhorrence of it, and repentance for it; to have seen the insufficiency of any works of the creature to justify before God, and render acceptable to him, the necessity of salvation alone by Christ, and to express some degree of faith in him, and hope of the hea-

^t Haec vero necessitas restringenda est ad fideles adultos, qui bona opera externa praestare possunt; infantes enim fidelium absque illis servantur (ut sine suo ullo actu proprie personali erant peccatores) & si non absque inclinatione ad illa per gratiam & spiritum regenerationis. *Mares. Colleg. Theolog. loc. 12. S. 12. p. 315.*

18 *The Necessity of Good Works*

venly inheritance; yet because they have not lived a regular life in time of health, have not gone through a course of good works, have not lived soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, must be therefore everlastingly banished from the realms of light. What comfort can a man of this principle be a means of administering? or what comfortable words can he speak to a poor creature become truly sensible of sin, and his lost estate, of his need of Christ, and salvation by him, on a death-bed? Can he, tho' he is satisfied, he has a true and thorough sense of things, encourage him to believe in Christ, and hope in him for everlasting life and salvation? No, he cannot; he must be obliged to tell him that it is too late to think or talk of these things, there is no hope for him; for since he has lived a vicious life, hell must be his portion; for where good works, a religious life and conversation don't go before, there can be no consequent happiness. Whereas, on the other hand, according to our principle, parents may hope for the salvation of their infants, that die in infancy; there is at least a possibility of it, whereas there is none in the other scheme; surviving relatives may rejoice, in hope of their deceased friends being gone to glory, who they have reason to believe have been called by grace, tho' at the last hour; ministers and others are capable of speaking
words

words of peace and consolation to distressed minds, whose hearts are pricked and become contrite on their dying beds: All which is a full confutation of what this writer asserts, " That " it is absolutely impossible that it (this tenet, that good works are not necessary to salvation) should do good to any person whatsoever." I readily own, that good works are necessary to be performed by all that are walking in the way to heaven, and expect to be saved by Christ, and glorified with him, who are either capable, or have an opportunity of performing them; but then they are not necessary as causes, conditions, or means of procuring glory and happiness for them; nor are they necessary as the antecedent to the consequent, to pave their way to heaven, to prepare and make them meet for it, or to put them into the possession of it; they don't go before in any such sense, or for any such use; they follow after: *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them* ^w.

It is said ^x, that it cannot possibly be for the advantage of a saint or a sinner, to be told that good works are in no sense necessary to salvation, not as the antecedent to the consequent; and that it may do a great

^u Address, &c. p. 7.

^w Rev. xiv. 13.

^x Address, &c. p. 6.

20 *The Necessity of Good Works*

deal of harm and mischief to the one and the other. I have already shewn it may be for the advantage, use, peace, and comfort of poor sensible sinners on their death-beds, and of surviving saints: Nor do I see what harm or mischief it can do to saints, lively or declining ones, or to profane sinners; not to lively judicious Christians, who are taught and encouraged by this doctrine to continue zealous of good works, and diligently to perform them, for many valuable, necessary uses, though not in order to salvation. What, will no motive induce a lively Christian to do good works, but what is taken and urged from the necessity of them unto salvation? Or can he be a judicious one, that acts from such a principle? Can't a declining Christian be induced to do his first works, unless he is told they are absolutely necessary to his salvation? Can't it be thought that arguments, taken from the command and will of God, from the glory of God, the honour of Christ, religion and truth, a man's own and his neighbour's good, demonstrating the necessity of doing good works, may be made use of as means to quicken his diligence, to cast off his spiritual sloth and carnal security, without insisting upon the necessity of them to salvation? Nor can it tend to harden sinners in sin, or put them upon running into greater transgressions, or induce them to
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harbour such a conceit, that they may get to heaven, let them live as they please; when they are told, that though good works can't save them, their evil works may damn them, or be the cause of damnation to them.

As for the texts of scripture produced by this writer, they are all of them impertinently alledged, and none of them at all to the purpose. Some of them do not relate to good works, but to internal holiness, the sanctification of the spirit, as *2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. Heb. xii. 14.* which is that grace God chuses his people to, in order to their enjoyment of glory; and without which, and that as perfect, for so it will be made by the Spirit of God, they cannot see or enjoy the Lord; and therefore it becomes them, by constant application at the throne of grace, to follow after a daily increase of it, and by their lives and conversations to evidence the truth and reality of it. Others only express the necessity of doing good works to testify the truth of faith, or contain motives in them to the performance of them, taken partly from the grace of God bestowed upon the saints here, and from the consideration of that happiness and glory they shall enjoy hereafter, as the fruits of grace, and not as the fruits and consequents of their works; as *Jam. ii. 17, &c. 2 Pet. iii. 10—14. Jude, 20, 21. 1 John iii. 1, 2, 3.* And it is easy to observe, that the whole current of scrip-

22 *The Necessity of Good Works*

scripture, and especially the epistles, run this way, to exclude works entirely from having any hand or concern in the justification and salvation of men. The passage out of *Clement*, I suppose, is chiefly produced to grace his margin, with a large citation in *Greek*; since it only sets forth the duty of those to perform good works, who would be found among the number of such who wait for God, and desire to partake of his promised gifts: for certain it is, that *Clement* did not think that good works were necessary to justification or glorification; seeing he expressly excludes them from either, when he says, “^γ All are glorified and magnified, not by themselves, or by their works or righteous actions which they have done, but by his own will: So we also, being called by his will in Christ Jesus, are justified; not by our selves, nor by our wisdom, or understanding, or piety, or works, which we have done in holiness of heart; but by that faith, by which the Almighty God hath justified all from the beginning, to whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*”

γ Παντες εν εδοξαθησαν κ̅ι̅ εμεγαλυνθησαν, & δι' αυτων, η των εργαων αυτων, η της δικαιοπραγιας ης κατεργασαντο, αλλα δια της θεληματ̅ου̅ αυτου· και ημεις εν δια θεληματ̅ου̅ αυτου εν Χειρω̅ Ιησου κληθεντες, & δι' εαυτων δικαιομεθα, & δε δια της ημετερας σοφιας, η συνεσεως, η ευσεβειας, η εργαων̅ων̅ κατεργασαμεθα εν οσιωτητι καρδιας, αλλα δια της πισεως, δι' ης παντας της απ' αιωνος ο παντοκρατωρ θεος εδικαιωσεν, ω̅ς̅ εωδοξα̅ εις̅ της αιωνας των αιωνων. Αμην.
Clement. Rom. ad Corinth. epist. i. p. 72. Ed. Oxon.

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We are next entertained with the rise and original of this tenet, that *good works are not necessary to salvation*. And it seems, according to our learned author ^z, that *Simon Magus* was the first broacher of it: And we are exposed as his disciples and followers; and some pains are taken to tell an idle, filthy story, of *Simon's* picking up a whore in a bawdy-house at *Tyre*, and committing fornication with her; no doubt with a view to insinuate to his readers, that our principles being alike, our practice must be so too; or, at least, that our principles have the same tendency. But if it should appear that *Simon's* tenets and ours are not the same, what will become of this little show of reading, and the mean artifice made use of to expose us to scorn and contempt? As for *Simon's* saying that salvation is by grace, and not by works, this was a doctrine he had from the Apostles themselves; which he turned into wantonness, and abused to vile purposes; and is in it self never the worse, nor is it to be thought the worse of, for his ill use of it: And as for the inference made from this doctrine, that therefore good works are not necessary; this is none of ours, we disclaim it; there's no agreement between *Simon's* tenet and ours, about good works; he urged they were not necessary to be done, we plead for the necessity of doing

^z Address, &c. p. 11.

24 *The Necessity of Good Works*

them, for the ends before mentioned, and which need not be repeated. *Simon, Carpo-*
crates, and their followers, who are represented as being in the same sentiments, held that every thing, besides faith and love, were things indifferent, neither good nor bad in their own nature, and so might be done or omitted. But can this man, with any face or conscience, say that these are our sentiments? We affirm that good works are in themselves good, cannot be dispensed with, but ought to be performed by all men; the tenet of these men was, that good works were not necessary at all in any sense, not necessary to be done. Where is the likeness, the agreement?

Give me leave, on this occasion, to enquire into the rise and original, and to point out the authors, abettors, and maintainers of the contrary tenet, that *good works are necessary to salvation*. The false apostles in *Judea*, and other *Judaizing* professors, were the first broachers of this notion; who taught the brethren, not only that circumcision, but that obedience to the law of *Moses*, the moral as well as ceremonial law, was necessary to salvation: See *Acts* xv. 1, 5. Which gave the true Apostles and primitive churches a great deal of trouble. To confute which, the Apostle *Paul* especially greatly laboured in all his writings, and particularly in his *epistles* to the *Romans* and
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Galatians. The *Papists*, the followers of the man of sin, have always been the abettors and maintainers of this principle; and so has *Socinus*, and his wretched adherents. The first among the reformed divines that vented it, was *George Major*, cotemporary and familiar with *Luther* and *Melancton*: He has been represented by some, from whom one should not have expected to have had such a character of him on this account, as *satelles Romani Pontificis*, a person imployed by the *Pope* of *Rome*; a tool of the Popish party, to create divisions and disturbances among the Reformed. The *Papists* finding they could not maintain with success their notion, that *good works were meritorious of salvation*, instead of the phrase, *meritorious of salvation*, substituted the other phrase, *necessary to salvation*, as being a softer one, in order to gain upon uncautious minds; when one and the same thing were designed by both: And this man was thought to be the instrument they made use of for this purpose. But however this be; certain it is, that the broaching of this doctrine by him gave great offence, and occasioned much disturbance. The writer of his life intimates, that the consequences of it gave *Major* himself some concern^a; and that “he

^a Quinimo diserte testatus est, se propositione illa, qua videret aliquos offendi, deinceps non usurum. *Melchior. Adam. Vita Georg. Major. p. 470.*

26 *The Necessity of Good Works*

declared, in so many words, that whereas he saw that some were offended, for the future he would no more make use of that proposition." Among the chief of his opposers was *Nicolaus Amsdorsius*, who in great heat and zeal asserted, in contradiction to *Major's* notion, that *good works were hurtful and dangerous to salvation*; a position not to be defended; unless when good works are put in the room of Christ, and are trusted to for salvation: But it is not doing of them that is or can be hurtful to salvation, but depending on them when done. This controversy raised great troubles in the churches, and gave *Melancton* a good deal of uneasiness; who at first was ensnared into the use of the phrase, though he afterwards rejected it, as improper and dangerous. *Amsdorsius* did not deny that good works were *to be done*, but could not be prevailed upon to own that they were *necessary*. *Melancton* at length allowed that *good works were not necessary to salvation*; nor did he dare to assert it: "For these reasons, says he, we teach that good works, or new obedience, are necessary; yet this must not by any means be tacked to it, that *good works are necessary to obtain salvation and eternal life*." In his answer to the pastors of *Saxony*, he has these words: "Nevertheless, let us not use this phrase, *good works are necessary to salvation*." And, in another place, "Verily I say, that
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I don't make use of this phrase, *good works are necessary to salvation*; but I affirm, that these propositions are true, and properly and without sophistry thus to be declared; *new obedience is necessary, or good works are necessary*; because obedience is due to God, according to that saying, *Debtors we are*^b. Now these were the sentiments, and which are exactly ours, of the great *Melancton*, that peaceable man, who never was charged with running into extremes in controversy; his greatest fault, and which has been complained of by some of his friends, who have had a great regard to him and his memory, was, that he was for composing differences, almost at anyrate, sometimes, as was thought, to the injury of truth, and with the hazard of losing it. I could easily produce a large number of learned and holy men, who have asserted the same thing: I shall content myself with transcribing *twelve* arguments, shewing that good works are not necessary to salvation, drawn up by that learned and

^b Propter has causas docemus, necessaria esse bona opera, seu novam obedientiam, nequaquam tamen assuendum est, bona opera ad salutem & vitam aeternam consequendam necessaria esse. *In responso ad Pastores Saxonicos*: Tamen hac phrasi non utamur, bona opera sunt necessaria ad salutem. *Alibi*. Plane dico, me non uti hac phrasi, bona opera sunt necessaria ad salutem; sed has propositiones affirmo veras esse, & proprie & sine sophistica sic dici: nova obedientia est necessaria, vel bona opera sunt necessaria, quia Deo debetur obedientia, juxta dictum, debitores sumus. *Melancton apud Hoornbeck*. Summ. Controv. l. 9. de Lutheranis, p. 523, 524.

28 *The Necessity of Good Works*

judicious Divine *Abraham Calovius*; who has deserved much of all men of learning and true Christianity, for his learned animadversions on *Grotius's* annotations on several passages in the *Psalms* and *prophets*, relating to the *Messiah*; and for his laborious confutation of *Socinus* and his followers, and his excellent defence of the orthodox faith against them. They are as follow. The question put is, "*Whether good works are necessary to salvation?*" The *Socinians*, says he^c, affirm this; but this opinion is deservedly rejected.

1. Because no such thing is ever to be found in the scriptures, namely, that *good works are necessary to salvation*. But if this was so principal a part of evangelic truth, as the adversaries plead, it should, upon the foot of the *Socinian* hypothesis, be contained in exprefs words in the scriptures; since they assert, that all things necessary to be known for salvation, are contained expressely in the scriptures.

^c *Utrum bona opera necessaria sunt ad salutem?* Affirmant hoc *Sociniani*: at sententia illa merito reprobatur.

1. Quia nusquam tale quid in scripturis habetur, bona sc. opera ad salutem necessaria esse. Si autem haec tam praecipua esset evangelicae veritatis pars, ut contendunt adversarii, expressis verbis eam in scripturis contineri oporteret, vi hypothesis Sociniana, qua omnia scitu necessaria ad salutem expresse in scripturis contineri asserunt, &c. *Calov. Socinismus Profligatus, Sect. 7. Art. 8. de bonis operibus, Controv. 1. p. 787, 788, &c.*

2. The

2. The Apostle treating of the causes of our salvation, removes good works, and entirely excludes them; and teaches, that he only has blessedness, to whom God imputeth righteousness without works, *Rom. iv. 6.* Compare *Eph. ii. 8. Tit. iii. 5.* If therefore good works are entirely excluded from the causes of salvation, how will the same be necessary to salvation?

3. That which is not necessary to our justification, that is not necessary to salvation, because there are no other causes of salvation than of justification: But good works are not necessary to justification. *Ergo.*

4. If we are saved by grace, then good works are not necessary to salvation; for the antithesis remains firm, *If of grace, then not of works; otherwise grace is not grace, Rom. xi. 6.* But the former is true, *Rom. vi. 23. Eph. ii. 8, 9.* therefore the latter also.

5. If by the obedience of one Christ we all obtain justification of life and salvation, then we are not saved by our own proper obedience: But the former is true, *Rom. v. 17, 18, 19.* therefore also the latter.

6. What is ascribed to faith alone, as it is contradistinguished from works, that is not to be attributed to works: But eternal salvation is ascribed to faith alone, *John iii. 16. Mark xvi. 16. Rom. i. 17. & iv. 6. Gal. iii. 11. Eph. ii. 8. Tit. iii. 5. Heb. x. 38. Ergo.*

30 *The Necessity of Good Works*

7. What is necessary to salvation, that, as much as it is necessary, is prescribed and required in the evangelic doctrine, *Rom. i. 16. & iii. 27.* But good works, as necessary to salvation, are not prescribed in the gospel, which is not conversant about works, but only about faith in Christ, *John iii. 16. & vi. 40. Rom. i. 17. & iv. 6.* seeing the law is the doctrine of works, the gospel the doctrine of faith, *Rom. iii. 27. Gal. iii. 12.*

8. Add to this, that this assertion concerning the necessity of good works to salvation, has been already rejected as false, in the false apostles, *Acts xv. 5.* where an opposition is formed to the sentiment of the Apostles, that we are saved by the grace of Jesus Christ, and that we are saved by the keeping of the law or works, and that the keeping of the law is necessary to salvation.

9. If good works were necessary to salvation, we should have whereof to glory; but the holy Spirit takes away all glorying from us, and for this very reason excludes good works from hence, *Eph. ii. 8, 9. Rom. iii. 27. & iv. 1, 2.*

10. If our election to salvation is of grace, and not of works, as the Apostle teaches, *Eph. i. 4, 5, 6. 2 Tim. i. 9.* good works can't be asserted to be necessary to salvation; for as we are chosen from eternity, so we are saved in time.

11. By

11. By whatsoever doctrine the certainty of our salvation is weakned or destroyed, that ought to be rejected: But such is this doctrine of the *Socinians*. *Ergo*.

12. Wherever the scripture produces reasons for which good works are necessary, it mentions quite others, than that they are necessary to salvation; namely, that we ought diligently to perform good works, because of God, because of Christ, because of the Holy Spirit, because of the holy angels, because of our neighbour, because of our selves, yea, even because of the devil."

Thus this excellent writer, confuting the *Socinian* error, that *good works are necessary to salvation*, strongly defends the contrary; which our *Theologaster* calls a *filthy dream*, *horrible blasphemy*, &c. This, it seems, is one of the paradoxes which lead to doctrinal *Antinomianism*. But why a *paradox*? A paradox, in the antient use of the word, signified a most certain truth, at least, embraced as such by men of wisdom and learning, though contrary to the opinion of the vulgar; which being unusual, struck them with surprize; whence such verities were sometimes called *παράδοξα*, and sometimes *admirabilia*^d. This use of the word, I suppose,

^d Ego autem illa ipsa, quae vix in gymnasiis & in otio Stoici probant, ludens conjeci in communis locos; quae quia sunt admirabilia, contraque opinionem omnium, ab ipsis etiam

32 *The Necessity of Good Works*

pose, will not be allowed to be applicable to this tenet. A paradox, in the modern use of the word, or in common acceptation, designs a proposition that carries in it either a real or seeming self-contradiction. Now the proposition, *good works are not necessary to salvation*, is plain and easy to be understood; and is either true or false, but no paradox. We need not go far for instances of paradoxes, this writer can furnish us with enow: As when he says, "Salvation is *all* of free grace, and good works, the fruits of holiness, a part of salvation, are absolutely necessary to *complete* salvation." The word *complete*, in this proposition, is so placed, as that it may be thought to be either a verb of the infinitive mood; and then the sense is, salvation is *all* of grace, and yet good works are absolutely necessary to *complete* it; or as an adjective to the word salvation; and then the sense is, salvation is *all* of grace, and good works are absolutely necessary to salvation *complete* without them: Take it either way, the self-contradiction is manifest enough. As also, when giving the character of a deceased minister of the gospel,

παρδοξα appellantur. Tentare volui possentne proferri in lucem, id est, in forum; & ita dici, ut probarentur, an alia quaedam esset erudita, alia popularis oratio; eoque scripsi libentius, quod mihi ista *παρδοξα*, quae appellantur, maxime videntur esse Socratica, longeque verissima. *Cicero. Paradox.*
p. 2140.

^c Advertisement.

whose

whose ashes he might have spared; he says,
“ He was a person of *real piety*, but discovered *so much pride and wrath* in his writings and conduct, (By the way, how could a man so wretchedly guilty of these things, write this without shame and blushing?) that it is hard to account for it; except we allow, that he had *a tincture of enthusiasm*.” The first of these instances is a *real* self-contradiction, and the other, at least, a *seeming* one; and both paradoxes. Again; why should this proposition, *good works are not necessary to salvation*, be represented as leading to doctrinal *Antinomianism*? This man ought to have informed his students what doctrinal *Antinomianism* is. Since he has not, I will. Doctrinal *Antinomianism*, properly speaking, is a denying, or setting aside the law of God, as a rule of life, action, or conversation. Now what tendency has the above proposition to such a notion? Or how does it appear, that the very quintessence of doctrinal *Antinomianism* is couched in it, as is ^s suggested? Though we say, that good works are not necessary to salvation; do we say, that they are not necessary to any thing else? Do we say, that they are not necessary to be done? Do we say, that they are not necessary to be done in obedience to the law of God? Do we say,

^f Address, &c. p. 14.

^s Ibid. p. 5.

34 *The Necessity of Good Works*

that the commands of the law are not to be regarded by men? That they are things indifferent, that may be done, or not done? No; we say none of these things, but all the reverse. *Do we then make void the law, through this doctrine? God forbid: Yea, we establish the law*^h, as it is in the hands of Christ our Law-giver; to which we desire to yield a chearful and hearty obedience; to shew our subjection to him as King of saints, and to testify our gratitude for the many blessings of every kind we receive from him. It is not worth my while to take notice of the flirtⁱ at the everlasting love of the divine persons being on all accounts the same, yesterday, to day, and for ever; which he knows, in his own conscience, only regards that love as in the breast of the divine persons, and not the manifestations of it; which are more or less to different persons, and so, to the same persons at different times. I have now done with what concerns my principles; and go on to consider,

The account of my character and qualifications as a minister, in company with others. His charitable sneer^k, at our weaker heads, and better hearts, I heartily despise; let him not trouble himself with other persons heads and hearts, but let

^h Rom. iii. 31.

ⁱ Address, &c. p. 35.

^k Advert.

him mind his own head, and his own heart : The weakness of the one I have been satisfied of years ago ; and now I am convinced of the naughtiness of the other. He represents me, among others, as a *botcher in Divinity*¹. I shall not call him so, but I'll prove him one. We know how to distinguish between the decree of God from eternity, and the execution of it in time, where there is any room for such a distinction, as well as he. But let me ask this wise Divine, whether he thinks that God's eternal decree of election of persons to everlasting life, is his eternal election of them ? Or, whether God from eternity decreed to chuse some in time to everlasting life ; which decree is executed, that is, he chuses them to salvation, when they repent, believe, and obey ? If he says the former, he is guilty of what he calls *botching*, in others ; if the latter, every one will be able to see his *Arminian, botching* Divinity. We are indeed no such *tackers* in Divinity, as to tack together things so barefacedly inconsistent, as that salvation is *all* of free grace, and yet good works are absolutely necessary to *complete* it, or are absolutely necessary to salvation *complete* without them. What *botching*, blundering Divinity is this ? What staring nonsense ? What stupid contradiction

¹ Advertisement.

36 *The Necessity of Good Works*

this? It seems there are not any three of us, in the scheme he opposes, that can be said to have so much as a little smattering of learning^m. Whether I am allowed to have it or no, I cannot say: I must own, I think it hard that that can't be granted me; since I have been endeavouring between *thirty* and *forty* years, even all my life, from a child of *five* or *six* years of age, partly under the instructions of others, and partly by my own industry, to acquire some degree of literature. And if a little smattering of learning is allowed me, 'tis all I must expect; for should there be one or two who have it, it seems there are not any three of us who have that. Pray what is this man's learning and reading more than another's? Yea, I ask, even than my own? If *I* am become a fool in glorying, as the Apostle saysⁿ in another case, this man has *compelled me*, by his rude and insolent treatment of my self and others. Does he understand *Latin*, *Greek*, and *Hebrew*? So do I. Though I question whether he does understand the latter; since otherwise, I doubt not, but we should have had flourishes of that, as well as of his *Greek* and *Latin*. Has he read the *Classicks*? So have I. I read *Virgil* at *nine* years of age; an age at which, if my information is right, this

^m Address, &c. p. 35, 36.

ⁿ 2 Cor. xii. 11.

man could not have learnt his mother-tongue. Has he read *Logic*, *Rhetoric*, *Ethicks*, *Physicks*, and *Metaphysicks*? So have I. Has he read the *Ethnic Philosophers*, *Platonists*, and *Stoicks*? So have I. Has he read the *Greek* and *Roman* historians, *Herodotus*, *Pausanias*, *Livy*, *Sallust*, &c? So have I. Has he read the *Greek* and *Latin* Fathers of the Christian church, and church history? So have I. Does he understand any of the *Oriental* languages besides the *Hebrew*, if he does that? He does not: I do. Has he read the *Jewish Targums*, the *Misna*, the two *Talmuds*, *Babylonian* and *Jerusalem*, the *Rabbot*, *Midrashim*, *Zohar*, with other writings of the *Jews*, antient and modern? He has not: I have. This last sort of learning and reading I know he'll be ready, through ignorance, to despise; but it is what has been diligently attended to, by persons he is not to be named with; such as the two *Buxtorf's*, father and son, *Fagius*, *Drusius*, *Mercer*, *Hottinger*, with multitudes of others in foreign parts; and our own countrymen, *Broughton*, *Ainsworth*, *Selden*, *Lightfoot*, &c. He may call my learning rambling learning, if he pleases, as he has another man's; I care not: I have enough to be a match for him; and if I han't, I'll get more for his sake; for I am not too old to learn, and, through divine goodness, don't want

38 *The Necessity of Good Works*

want industry, diligence, and application. After all, this man himself, with even *D.D.* to his name, makes a very odd figure; since this his character stands supported on the one hand with impotent wrath and fury, and on the other hand with such sad blundering stuff as this; salvation is *all* of grace, and good works are absolutely necessary to *complete* it, or are absolutely necessary to salvation *complete* without them; for one or other of these must be his sense, and both are extravagantly stupid. Who is this man, that looks with so much disdain and contempt upon all around him? The other day he was an ordinary school-master, a *teacher of babes*, as best became him. Who called this *proud, baughty, wrathful man*, to be a tutor and director of young men, in their studies for the ministry? Did the ministers and messengers concerned in the Fund for the *Independent Denomination*, of which denomination he is? No; they did not: They put their youth under the care of the very learned Mr. *Eames*; a Gentleman, who on the account of his universal erudition, and singular modesty, will justly share the esteem, whilst this *pedantic creature* will be righteously the scorn, of all men of true sense, learning, and ingenuity. Who called this man to this work, I ask again? A society of men that meet at a *tavern*, commonly call'd *the King's Head Society*;

to whom he has dedicated this his performance, and who seem to have put him upon writing of it.

There is one thing I would not forget to observe, before I conclude; and that is, that this man desires the Society who have employed him, whether sincerely or no, I leave, to beg of Christ for him, that, among other things, he would afford him a measure of *humility*. I hope they will not forget him, in private and public; and, particularly, at their monthly exercises; nay, it might not be improper, perhaps, if they would set a day apart on purpose, on that account; since the youth they have put under his care are likely to suffer much by his ill example: And let them not forget to pray to God also that he would convince him of his sin, and give him repentance for it; I mean, his almost unpardonable sneer at the *inward call* of the ministers of Christ to preach his gospel; seeing without that, which is the peculiar office of the blessed Spirit to give, and those gifts which our exalted Lord and Head has received for men, all human acquirements and advantages will be of no real use in the ministry; and with the former, though destitute of the latter, mechanicks, or such as have been, or are, labourers in secular employments, do more service for Christ, in the ministration
of

40 *The Necessity of Good Works, &c.*

of his gospel, than learned Dunces, or ignorant Doctors of Divinity.

It seems that no notice will be taken of me by this writer; he has a licence to abuse men, and their principles, without being called to an account for the same, or obliged to give a reason of his so doing. I must expect no reply from him. I don't know that: For as it is an observation that every one is able to make, that the most blustering fellows are the greatest cowards; so it may be observed, that those cowards, when dared to it, will sometimes fight, though they themselves thought they never should, and determined they never would.

F I N I S.
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